

WEST VIRGINIA TROOPER

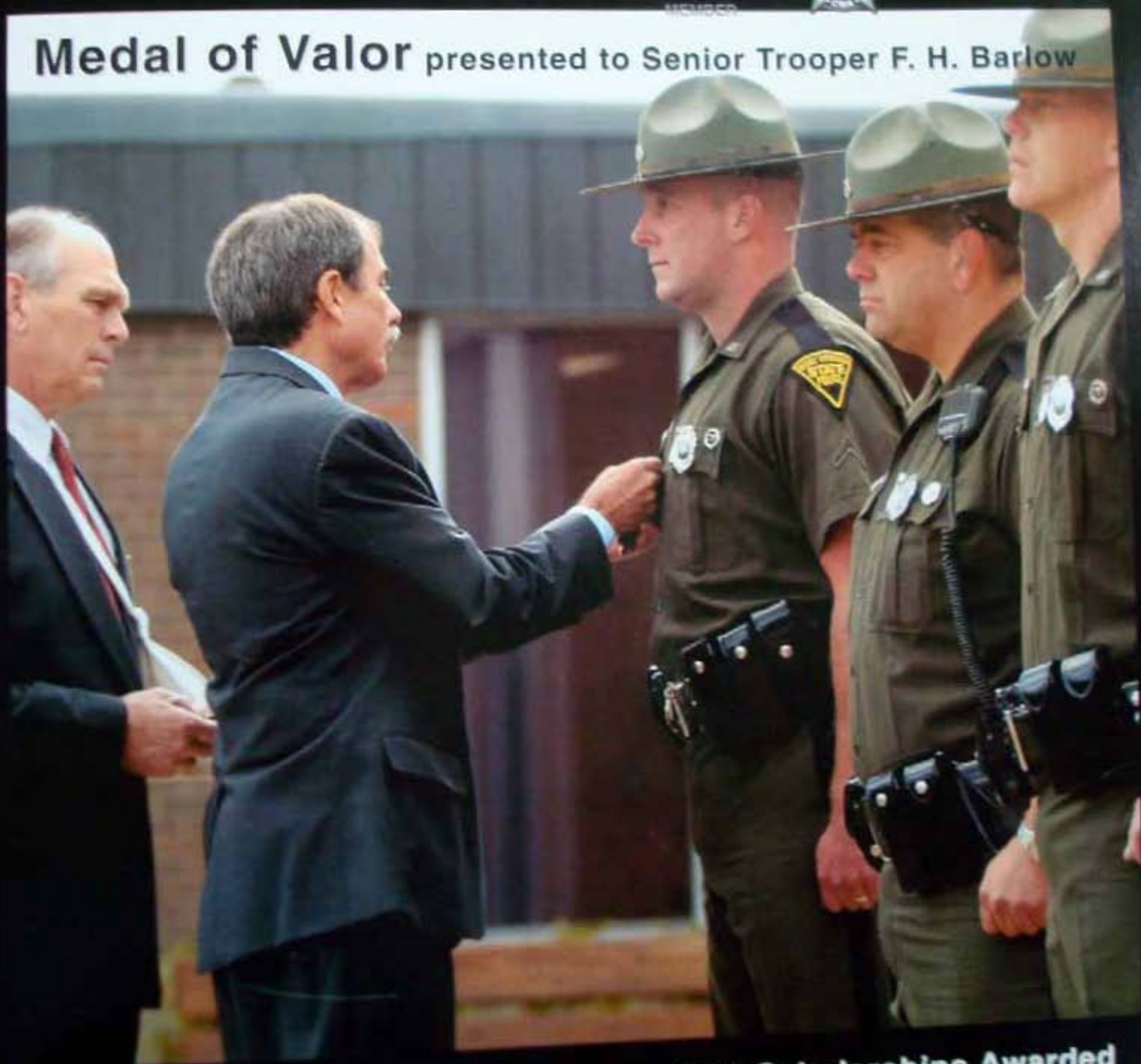


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Medal of Valor presented to Senior Trooper F. H. Barlow



- Trooper of Year Award
- 2003 Conference Review

- 2003 Scholarships Awarded
- Undermanned & Underpaid

presented to Senior Trooper F. H. B



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Pictured left to right: Troopers F.C. Holcomb, S.P. Owens, R.D. Carson, C.A. Blevins, R.M. Hogan, R.L. Clevenger, C.F. Trader, G.L. Menendez, F.H. Barlow, and Governor Bob Wise.

Signal 5 — Officer Needs Help!

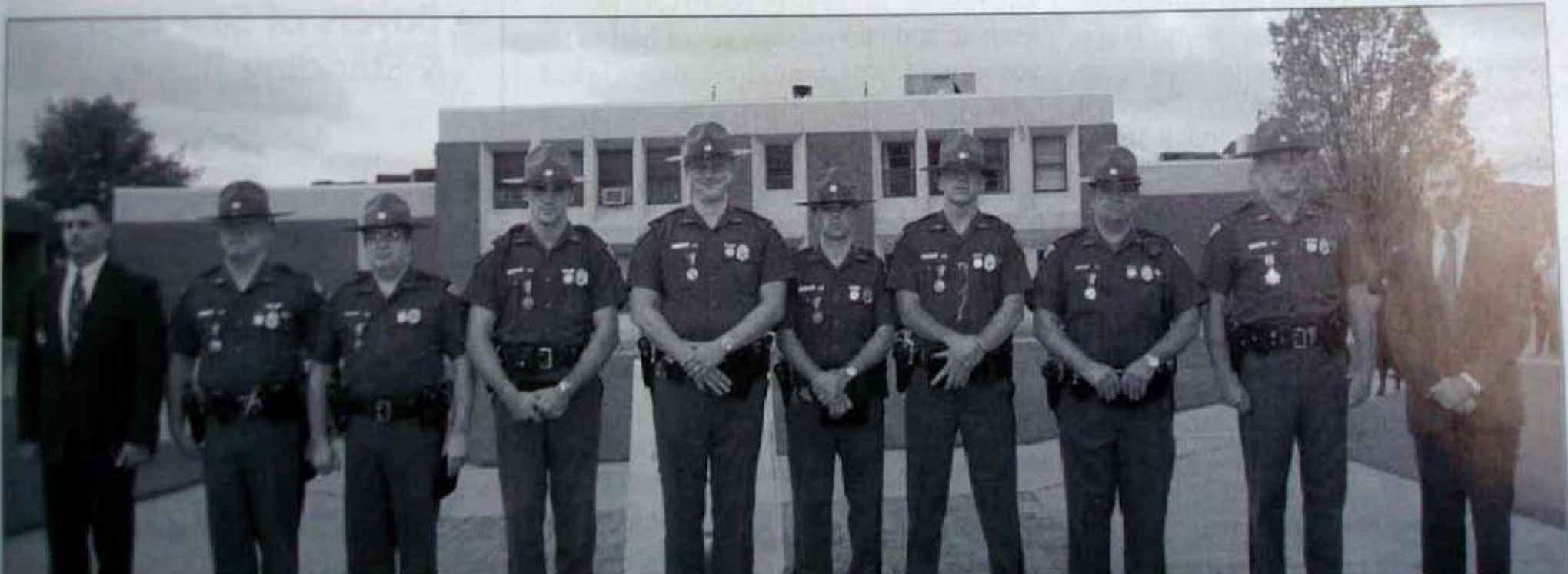
By Jason Laing and Joe Parsons

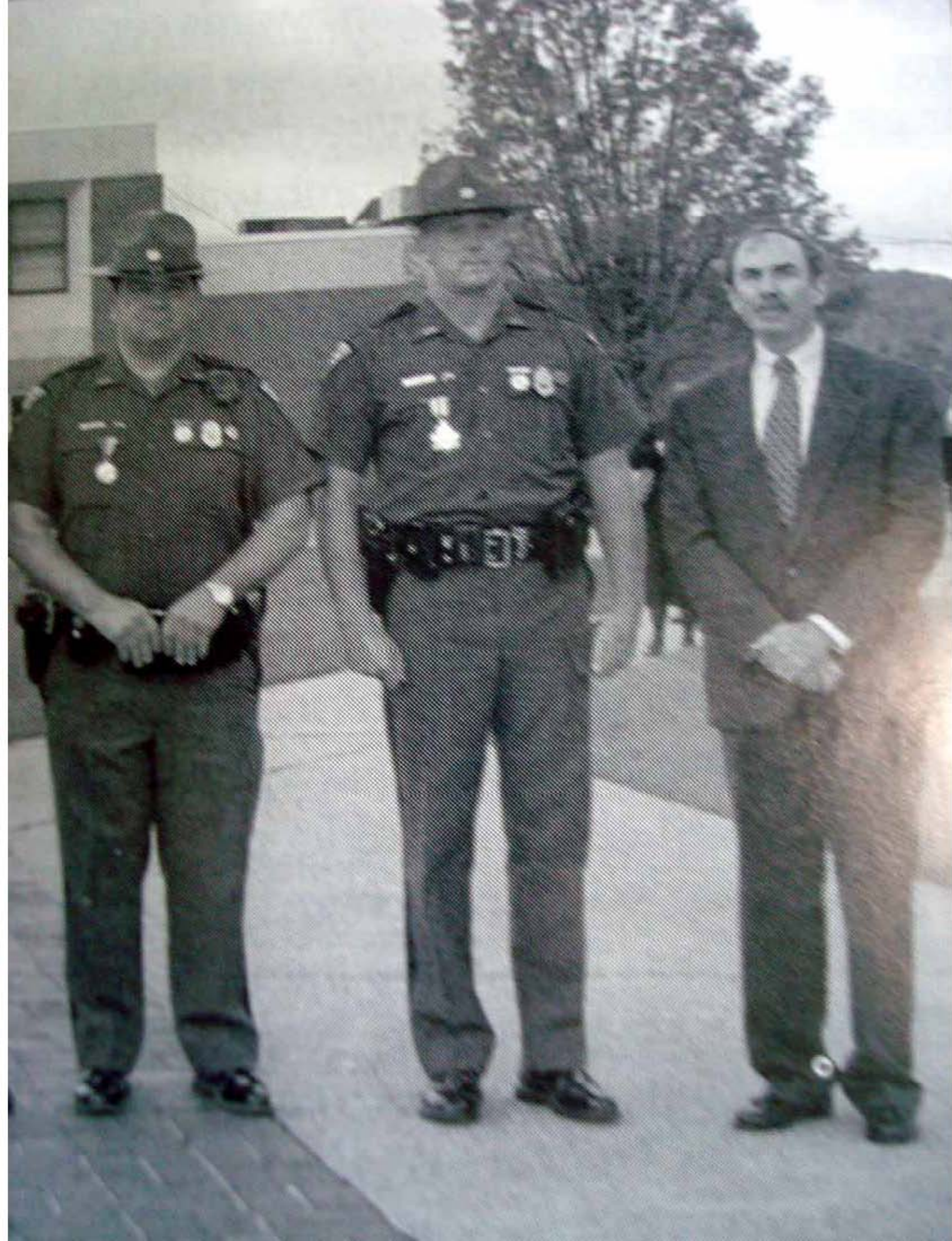
Many people may look at law enforcement in West Virginia and think that not much is happening here, nothing like what is seen on the national news or television shows glorifying big city police officers each evening. One may think, "Our

officers here may have a dangerous job, but it's not nearly as dangerous as in other places." Those individuals would be thinking wrong. Sparse in population, West Virginia is likewise sparsely protected by too few officers who are spread thin by our vast mountainous terrain. Below are a few examples of just what our officers here in the Mountain State are confronted with

on an alarmingly more frequent basis.

In a tragic incident in Berkeley County October 10th 2002, Trooper First Class Bobby Joe Elswick was shot in the head by David Munday when responding to a complaint of a domestic dispute near Hedgesville. Bobby was standing with three other troopers briefing them on the incident and planning how to apprehend Munday, who was armed with a rifle and had reportedly taken some





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neighbors hostage, when Munday fired at the officers and struck Bobby Joe. Munday was pursued into the woods after an exchange of gunfire and eventually apprehended. While Munday was recently convicted on a variety of charges stemming from the incident, Bobby Joe will not be able to return to the job he loved due to injuries sustained in the attack.

In May of 2003, Senior Trooper Frank Holcomb responded to a 911 disturbance call with Mason County Deputies near Point Pleasant. As the officers approached the residence of David Selby, a shot rang out from the wooded hillside near the residence. Selby had concealed himself in the woods and waited on officers to approach, ambushing Trooper Holcomb and shooting him in the upper thigh. Selby was arrested a short time later and charged with Malicious Wounding. Frank is undergoing rehabilitation now and is expected to return to work soon. In September 2003 at an awards ceremony held at the West Virginia State Police Academy, Governor Bob Wise decorated Senior Trooper Frank E. Holcomb with the Purple Heart.

That same summer, a Buckhannon City Police officer was shot with a handgun during a traffic stop on an individual who had allegedly been involved in a domestic dispute with his girlfriend. The investigation lead to the home of Scott Ennis in nearby Randolph County. As Randolph County authorities approached the Ennis residence, shots were fired and three officers were struck and wounded by the gunfire. To their dismay the officers also found themselves pinned down by continuing fire. State Troopers as well as other officers from the region responded to the "officer needs help" call and discovered a grizzly scene. Wounded officers could not be treated or moved due to repeated gunfire from the Ennis residence. Troopers from the K-9 unit, Special Response

Team, Aviation and nearby detachments participated in the rescue of the fallen officers by employing a local fire truck to provide rolling cover. For their efforts eight separate troopers were decorated by Governor Bob Wise at the same awards ceremony held at the Academy. Receiving the Medal of Valor for his actions in rescuing the officers was Senior Trooper F. H. "Herbie" Barlow. Receiving the Meritorious Service Medal was Senior Trooper S. P. Owens, First Sergeant Robert D. Carson, Sergeant G. L. Menendez, Senior Trooper C. A. Blevins, Senior Trooper R. L. Clevenger, Senior Trooper R. M. Hogan and Sergeant C. F. Trader. Scott Ennis was apprehended and charged with the numerous shootings by the State Police Special Response Team when they forced entry into the Ennis home. Interestingly enough, the eight troopers decorated in the incident were from as far away as Marlinton, Parsons, Bridgeport, South Charleston, Institute and Elkins as resources had to be summoned from around the state to deal with the situation.

In August of 2003 State Troopers in Greenbrier County arrested John Mayhew after he shot a Greenbrier Deputy Sheriff who had stopped him for a traffic violation. Mayhew was pursued and rammed a roadblock set by troopers, then opened fire on his 18 year old daughter who was in the car with him. After troopers took Mayhew into custody at his vehicle, it was discovered that he had murdered his ex-wife and her fiancée in Columbus, Ohio prior to shooting the deputy here in West Virginia.

These are just a few of the all too violent episodes encountered by West Virginia law enforcement officers, whether they be troopers, deputies or city patrolmen, during the course of performing their duties. The officers need help, your help, to gain adequate manpower and equipment to effectively, and safely, do their jobs.